



## INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

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<p>(21) International Application Number: PCT/US93/06763 (22) International Filing Date: 12 July 1993 (12.07.93) (30) Priority data: 07/912,482 13 July 1992 (13.07.92) US (71)(72) Applicants and Inventors: SCHNEIDER, Matthew, T. [US/US]; 8 Bluestone Terrace, Morristown, NJ 07960 (US). SCHNEIDER, Michael, B. [US/US]; 1300 Oak Creek Drive, #218, Palo Alto, CA 94304 (US). (74) Agents: CISLO, Donald, M. et al.; Cislo &amp; Thomas, 233 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 900, Santa Monica, CA 90401 (US).</p>		<p>(81) Designated States: AT, AU, BB, BG, BR, CA, CH, CZ, DE, DK, ES, FI, GB, HU, JP, KP, KR, KZ, LK, LU, MG, MN, MW, NL, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SK, UA, VN, European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).  <b>Published</b> <i>With international search report.</i></p>
<p>(54) Title: PORTABLE SEALABLE CONTAINER</p>		
<p>(57) Abstract</p> <p>The invention relates to a sealable container (7) for holding a book, magazine, computer or like items (9) comprising two planar members (11, 13) with a transparent section which may be hingedly joined together or connected by flexible walls (25) with access ports having gloves (73, 75) to allow interior manipulation while maintaining a moisture and dirt free environment of the interior region of the container. Furthermore, a clip (47) can hold the items against the transparent section for purposes of ease of viewing. Also, a light (79) can be incorporated with the container to provide for ease of viewing in a darkened environment. The sealable container can be unsealed for purposes of putting items therein, and subsequently sealed for transporting those items into a moisture-rich environment. The sealable container may be buoyant, provides for a protective environment for those items to be viewed, is easily carried by a handle (33), and is easily folded to a closed position using securing hooks (65).</p>		

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PORTABLE SEALABLE CONTAINERBACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates generally to a container for reading materials, or computers and, more particularly, to containers which can retain reading materials or computers in a dry and protected condition against the elements, while allowing the reading materials or computer to be read, pages turned, or keys depressed.

Various types of sealable containers for books or other reading materials are available. They vary widely in shape, complexity and effectiveness. Such sealable containers typically include a sealing means and an innercompartment to retain the reading materials. Although these devices may protect the book or reading materials from moisture and wind, the materials cannot be easily inserted, viewed, nor their pages easily turned.

A preliminary patentability search was conducted at the U.S. Patent and Trademark office directed to a field of search encompassing Classes 206/450, 811, 424, 522; 281/15.1, 17, 18, 19.1, 29, 35; 283/64; D19/26, 28, 32; 600/21, 22; 441/129, 136; 383/3, 108, and 902. A number of patents were found which relate to sealing devices or devices which might be useful in sealing reading materials. Those patents are listed below:

<u>Patent No.</u>	<u>Inventor</u>	<u>Date of Issue</u>
2,558,936	H. Ullmann	July 3, 1951
2,600,240	B.C. Grieb	June 10, 1952

	3,267,830	W.H. Van Gaasbeek	August 23, 1966
	4,099,656	H. Neumann et al.	July 11, 1978
	4,244,603	L. De Monti	January 13, 1981
	4,518,364	V.R. Jacobson	May 21, 1985
5	4,703,161	R.D. McLean	October 27, 1987
	4,962,949	M. L. Gibbs	October 16, 1990
	5,005,702	M. S. Davis et al.	April 9, 1991
	5,013,068	D. J. Maldonado	May 7, 1991

U.S. Patent No. 4,099,656 to Neumann et al., discloses a  
10 multi-purpose carrying bag or case. The case includes an air-tight  
and water-tight zipper, fill valves and handles. The case can be  
used for water tight and buoyant storage holding all types of  
articles. However, the case does not have a means to access an  
interior chamber while retaining water tight and air tight  
15 characteristics of the case, nor illumination means.

U.S. Patent No. 3,267,830 to Van Gaasbeek discloses a dry box  
apparatus. The dry box apparatus comprises a rigid transparent  
dome shape having a pair of access openings adapted to receive a  
pair of conventional gloves.

20 U.S. Patent No. 4,518,364 issued to Jacobson discloses a  
swimming instruction device. The device comprises a kick board  
having an upper and lower surface. The guide means affixed to the  
upper surface of the kick board can receive a swimming instruction  
card in a transparent cover inserted between the guide members and  
25 for covering the swimming instruction card.

U.S. Patent No. 2,558,996 issued to Ullmann discloses a  
floatable plastic book. The book is made of plastic and comprises

a plurality of leaves made out of two transparent sheets sealed along their margins. The paper sheets have indicia imprinted thereon which may be disposed in the pockets formed by the bonded leaves.

5 U.S. Patent No. 4,244,603 issued to De Monti discloses a book comprising a plurality of cards secured between covers by a pin. The cards and the covers are made of plastic.

10 U.S. Patent No. 4,703,161 issued to McLean discloses a ruggedized calculator. The calculator includes a flotation cell housing having flotation cells in an outer covering having side insulation panels covered by outer plastic covers and a rear insulation panel covered by a rear outer panel and a face access panel covered by a plastic face cover. The material is made of foam for flotation purposes.

15 U.S. Patent No. 5,013,068 issued to Maldonado discloses a stretchable water repellent book cover. The book cover comprises an envelope having a stretchable sheet defining front and rear sections and adapted to closely overlie the front and rear book cover, stretchable flaps, and extending adjacent the inner sides of  
20 the sheet sections providing a seal. The sheet is comprised of a thick layer of closed cell elastomeric compressible foam, such as neoprene and a thin layer of compressible synthetic fiber.

25 U.S. Patent No. 4,962,949 issued to Gibbs discloses a book blanket comprising a flat piece of transparent flexible material having its side ends folded over to form pouches, in a plurality of pellets disposed in the pouches. The pouches are stitched around three edges to enclose the pellets.

It is frequently desirable that books, magazines, or laptop computers, are contained in sealable containers which provide for ease of placement, within the container, and for ease of subsequent removal. Also, it is desirable that the book or other item can be placed, clipped, or sufficiently retained within the container for ease of reading or viewing, and that the container have a viewing surface which will not distort the reader's view of the book. It is also desirable that the items within the container can be exteriorly manipulated.

Furthermore, it is preferable for such a device to be compact when not in use, and be easily carried, stored, and used. Also, it is desirable that the container be easily manufactured from currently available materials, and also provide the ability to read the materials in darkness. Finally, it is desirable that the container be buoyant so that it might be used in a jacuzzi or a swimming pool.

There is a potential interest in the novelty, computer and book container industry to manufacture, distribute and market such a container. The features identified above as being desirable for book containers are all provided by the present invention.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is embodied in an improved sealable container for reading materials, computers or the like items which allows the reader to place the items within the container to protect them from moisture, rain, dirt, splashes or the effects of wind. Yet, the contents of the container can be easily accessed. For reading materials, pages can be easily read and pages turned while protecting the book. For computers and other electronic equipment, the screen and keyboard can be easily viewed and accessed. The invention is extremely economical, can be completely effective in providing protection of the reading materials while allowing the reader to easily read the materials or view the computer in all kinds of conditions, including darkness. The container can be easily transported, and is easily used for both storage of the reading materials and for reading the reading materials.

More particularly, the invention comprises a transparent section, envelope, bubble or container which is air tight and water tight and has flotation qualities for purposes of reading a book or viewing a computer while sitting in a jacuzzi, swimming pool or on the beach. Additionally, the invention comprises a means for allowing manual access to the book or computer while it is inside the sealed chamber and a lighting means for illuminating the book as an additional option. The device can be inflatable and/or collapsible.

In more detailed aspects of one embodiment of the invention, the sealable container for holding a book, computer, electronic devices, or the like comprises a transparent first planar member

having a first edge, second edge, third edge and fourth edge. A second planar member having a first edge, a second edge, a third edge and a fourth edge can be coupled to the first transparent plane or member along both planar members' first edges.

5 A first flexible wall couples the second edges of the planar members, while a second flexible wall couples the third edges of the planar members. Both flexible walls can be of a folded nature so as to collapse when the planer members are folded with respect to each other for compactness or storage.

10 A third rear wall couples the fourth edges of the planar members and the flexible walls, and can be selectively sealed or opened for purposes of placing the reading materials within the container. A book, laptop computer, or other electronic device can be placed within or removed from the sealable container using a  
15 type of rolled up velcro fastening device or other type of fastening device. Once the book or computer is inside the container it can be easily read through the transparent first planar member.

20 Left and right hand gloves or envelopes can be incorporated within the first and second flexible walls to allow the reader to insert his hands into the gloves and manipulate the pages of the book within. Also, a book stand, book clip, or a lighting device can be incorporated within the container to hold and illuminate the book during reading.

25 In another embodiment the container can have planar members with a flexible and extending transparent material forming an interior chamber therebetween. One side of the flexible material can be dissociated from the planar members to allow the insertion



or removal of a book from the container, or the transparent material can have a sealable opening.

In yet another embodiment of the invention, the container has a resilient and tactile transparent cover section in which a computer keyboard can be manipulated.

Other aspects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following description of the preferred embodiments, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, which illustrate, by way of example, the principles of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of a sealable container embodying the present invention with a book held therein in a sealed condition;

5 FIG. 2 is a front perspective view of the sealed container embodying the present invention as shown in FIG. 1 without a book, without a book clip, and in an opened or unsealed condition;

10 FIG. 3 is a front perspective view of a sealed container embodying a second embodiment of the present invention shown in a sealed condition;

FIG. 4 is a front perspective view of a sealed container embodying a third embodiment of the present invention shown in a sealed condition; and

15 FIG. 5 is a top plan view of the sealed container shown in FIG. 4 in an unsealed condition;

FIG. 6 is a front perspective view of a fourth embodiment of the present invention shown in a sealed condition with a laptop or notebook computer held therein; and

20 FIG. 7 is a front perspective view of a fifth embodiment of the present invention shown in an inflated and sealed condition.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

As shown in the drawings, wherein like numerals represent like elements throughout, one embodiment of the invention most particularly shown in FIG. 1 is embodied in a sealable container 7 of a kind that can retain therein a book 9 or other reading materials (not shown) in a sealed condition. The container 7 comprises a transparent rigid planar member 11 hingedly connected to a second planar member 13 with a hinge connection 15 therebetween along a first edge 17 of the first planar member 11 and a first edge 19 along the second planar member 13.

The first and second planar members 11 and 13 are further connected along a second side 21 of the first planar member 11 and a second side 23 of the second planar member 13 by a fan-like folding wall 25 having a plurality of folds 26 which allow the wall 25 to fold open or close. Similarly, on an opposite end of the container 7, a second flexible wall 27 joins a third side 29 of the first planar member 11 and a third side 31 of the second planar member 13. Again, the flexible wall 27 has a plurality of folds 26 which allow the flexible wall 27 to fold in a fan-like fashion so as to fold open or fold close in unison with the flexible wall 25.

Associated with the second planar member 13 is a handle 33 attached by rivets 35 or some other fastening means. The handle 33 is fastened along the exterior first edge 19 of the second planar member 13.

A fourth edge 37 of the first planar member 11 is attached to a fourth edge 39 of the second planar member 13 by way of a flexible membrane or wall 41 which may or may not have a plurality of creases or folds (not shown) adjacent and in alignment with the

plurality of folds 26 of the first and second flexible walls 25 and 29, respectively. The flexible wall 41 is joined to the flexible walls 25 and 27. However, a first edge 43 of the flexible wall 41 is selectively attachable or detachable to the fourth side 37 of the first planar member 11. As shown in FIG. 2, a sealing attachment means 45 such as velcro 61 can be used for sealing engagement between the flexible wall 41 and the first planar member 11, or located at other localities of the container 7. The fastening means 45 can be unfastened to provide access within the container 7 to place reading materials within the container 7 or to remove them. As shown in FIG. 1, the container 7 is sealed with a book 9 therein protected against the elements.

Incorporated within the sealed container 7 is a clipboard type clip 47 which is attachable to the first planar member 11 by rivets 49, screws or the like so that book 9 can be clipped and held in place against the transparent first planar member 11. The clip 47 can be positioned anywhere on the first planar member 11. The clip 47 may, however, be attached anywhere on the second planar member 13 instead. Alternatively, other types of book stands (not shown) can be utilized within the container 7.

FIG. 2 shows the container 7 in an unsealed condition without a book therein. The fastening means 45 is shown in clearer detail constituting a plurality of folds 51 terminating with an opening 53 which provides access to an interior 55 of the container 7. On an underside 57 on the third fold 59 is an extending strip of velcro 61 along the entire length of the fold 59 which is a companion to a mating strip 63 of velcro along the fourth side 43 of the first planar member 11. The combination of the velcro

strips 61 and 63 with the plurality of folds 51 when rolled over on to themselves creates an air tight and water tight seal. This combination provides for the buoyancy of the container 7 upon water, as well as protecting any materials therein.

5           It should be appreciated by those ordinarily skilled in the packaging art that such a velcro fastening means 45 is currently available and used in various types of air tight and water tight packaging. It should be realized to the person ordinarily skilled in the art that a wide variety of other types of fastening or  
10           sealing means are available and can be utilized within the invention.

          It should also be appreciated that the clip 47 and its means for attachment, either rivets 49 or other means, is commonly known in the art and can be made of plastic or metal. The first planar  
15           member 11 comprises a polymeric material such as acrylic, plexi-glass, polycarbonate, or some other durable transparent material. The second planar means 13 can be made of a similar material, and is ideally also transparent. However, it is not essential that it is transparent. For greater versatility it is preferable that the  
20           second planar member 13 is transparent for viewing both sides of the reading material held in the container 7. Flexible walls 25 and 29 can be made of a flexible material such as polyethylene, as can be flexible wall 41. Other materials can also be used as known by persons skilled in the art.

25           Furthermore, hooks 65 of a polymeric or metal material can be adhesively or screwedly fastened to the outside of the fourth edge 39 of the second planar member 13. Alternatively, the hooks 65 can be molded integrally with the planar members 11 and 13. The hooks

65 are configured to attach to the outside of the fourth edge 41 of the first planar member 11 so as to retain the first and second planar members 11 and 13, respectively, in a collapsed and secured condition. The hooks 65 should have a curvature which allows attachment over the fastening means 45 in a sealed condition. In such a closed condition the container 7 can be more compactly transported or stored.

FIG. 3 shows a second embodiment of invention designated as numeral 67 having first and second openings 69 and 70, respectively, in the first and second flexible walls 25 and 29, respectively. The openings 69 and 70 may be oval or round and of a sufficient size to allow a hand to pass through the openings 69 and 70, and into the container 67. The material surrounding the openings 69 and 70 may be flexible. Attached to a sealed periphery 71 of each of the openings 69 and 70, respectively, are right and left gloves designated as numerals 73 and 75, respectively. The material of these gloves 73 and 75 can be latex or other types of polymeric material which provides a durable seal against moisture. The gloves 73 and 75 can be heat sealed or otherwise attached to the first and second flexible walls 25 and 29, respectively. Such means of attachment are commonly known in the art. Also, gloves 73 and 75 can be mittens or simply an enveloping structure or hand entry portions to allow page manipulation of the reading materials within the container 67.

In addition, a lighting device 77 can be utilized comprising a bulb 79 attached to a light housing 81 which may contain a battery (not shown) and a switch 83 which protrudes through a sealed hole 78 in the first planar member 11 so that the switch 83

can be accessible from the exterior of the container 67 to turn on and off the lighting device 77 for reading purposes. The light housing 81 may be attached to the first planar member 11 by sealed rivets 85 or some other means which will provide a water-tight seal between the light housing 81 and the first planar member 11. In all other aspects, the embodiment shown in FIG. 3 is substantially similar to the invention shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 with regards to its other features, materials, construction, and operation.

FIG. 4 and 5 show a third embodiment of the invention designated by the reference numeral 89. In this embodiment first and second planar members 91 and 92, respectively, have openings 69 and 70 with attached gloves 73 and 75, respectively, similar to the embodiment shown in FIG. 3. The planar members 91 and 92 need not be transparent, however, for purposes of greater visibility within the container 89, it is preferred that these planar members 91 and 92 are of a transparent material. Furthermore, these planar members 91 and 92, respectively, each have an integral handle 93.

In this embodiment the first and second planar members 91 and 92 operate parallel to each other and have a substantially similar configuration except that the second planar member 92 has a plurality of hooks 65 for purposes of engaging the first planar member 91 in a collapsed condition, and provide for a more compact container 89 when not in use. Whether the sealed container 89 is in a reading or unfolded condition, the planar members 91 and 92 are generally parallel to each other.

The first and second planar members 91 and 92 are oppositely and adjacently connected by a cylindrical or rectangular transparent tunnel 95 which is flexible and collapsible so as to

collapse between the first and second planar members 91 and 92 when the container 89 is not being used for reading purposes.

A similar sealing means 101 as shown in the first two embodiments as numeral 43 is incorporated, and more particularly shown in FIG. 5 in an open condition. The material of the sealing means 101 and the tunnel 95 are of a transparent and flexible polymeric material, and are adhesively or thermally joined to the first and second planar members 91 and 92.

In yet a fourth embodiment as shown in FIG. 6, a sealable container is represented by the reference numeral 107. This container is specifically suited for a laptop or notebook type computer 109 shown within the container 107. Although various other types of electronic equipment may be utilized within the container 107.

A preferably transparent viewing portion 111 is fastened or connected to a back panel 113. The back panel 113 is hingedly fastened or connected with a bottom panel 115.

The viewing portion 111 is also associated with a flexible membrane 117 which may have a raised profile or form fitting corresponding to keys 118 of the computer 109. Or alternatively, the membrane 117 can be a thin plastic sheet which is sufficiently deformable so as to allow a person to selectively depress the keys 118 of the computer 109 exteriorly. Both the viewing portion 111 and the membrane 117 may be separate elements or a unitary whole.

Similarly, the other elements 111, 113 and 115 may be rigid or flexible, as well as transparent or opaque. However, the viewing portion 111 must be transparent to allow proper viewing of the computer 109 within.



Hinges or hinge 121 form the interconnection between the panels 113, 115. However, other types of waterproof hinges are known to persons skilled in the art and such hinges can be utilized. The membrane 117 and viewing portion 111 may be resilient plastic of a reduced thickness to allow for folding the container 107.

As shown in FIG. 6 the panels 113, 115, and membrane 117 have side edges 123 which are joined together by a flexible sheet 125 on both sides so as to form the sealable container 107. The flexible sheets 125 must be of sufficient area to allow the elements 113, 115 and 121 and membrane 117 to fold-up when the computer 109 within is folded closed in order to maintain the sealed condition.

It should be apparent that this embodiment utilizes the same type of fastening means 45 as illustrated in greater detail in FIGS. 1-5. The fastening means 45 joins together the flexible membrane 117 and the bottom panel 115 and can be opened as previously discussed for placing materials such as a computer 109 shown in FIG. 6.

Also, hooks 65 and a handle 33 can be incorporated as described with regard to the first embodiment shown in FIGS. 1 and 2.

Similarly, all of the attributes and features discussed with respect to the first three embodiments shown in FIGS. 1-5 and described herein may also be equally applicable to the embodiment shown in FIG. 6.

It should be noted the dimensions of the viewing panel 111, back panel 113, bottom panel 115, membrane 117, front panel 121 and flexible sheets 125 are quite variable and can be changed depending

upon the type of equipment to be placed within the sealable container 107.

In yet a fifth embodiment of the invention as shown in Fig. 7, a sealable container is represented by the reference numeral 127.

5 This container has a transparent flexible and inflatable membrane 127 with an inflation valve 131, their combination being akin to a transparent and inflatable beach ball, but also having a velcro sealing means 101 as shown in the other embodiments of the invention and access openings 69 and 70 associated with gloves 70  
10 and 73, respectively, and interconnected thereto similar to those second and third embodiments of the inventions.

It should be appreciated from the foregoing description that the present invention provides an improved sealable container for reading materials, books, computers and the like which allows for  
15 reading or viewing the items in a humid, damp, wet, windy, dusty and/or darkened environment. Furthermore, the invention is collapsible and easily transportable with a handle and is compact for ease of storage. It should be further appreciated that the present invention allows the reader or viewer to easily manipulate  
20 the pages or operate a device such as a computer within the sealed container. The present invention can be manufactured using methods known in the art from materials which are known in the art.

Although the present invention has been described in detail with reference only to the presently-preferred embodiments, it will  
25 be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that various modifications can be made without departing from the invention. Accordingly, the invention is limited only by the following claims.

PORTABLE SEALABLE CONTAINER

We claim:

1. A sealable container for holding a book, computer or the like comprising:

5 (a) a transparent first planar member having a first edge, a second edge, a third edge and a fourth edge;

(b) a second planar member having a first edge, a second edge, a third edge and a fourth edge, wherein said first edge of said second planar member is sealingly coupled to said first edge  
10 of said first planar member;

(c) a first flexible wall sealingly coupling said second edge of said first planar member and said second edge of said second planar member;

(d) a second flexible wall sealingly coupling said third edge  
15 of said first planar member and said third edge of said second planar member; and

(e) a third flexible wall sealingly coupling said fourth edges of said first and second planar members and joining said first and second flexible walls, said third flexible wall along  
20 said fourth edges, selectively unsealing and having a means for selectively sealing and unsealing said fourth edges to allow access to an interior of the sealable container, whereby the book, computer, or the like can be placed within or removed from the sealable container when the container is unsealed, and whereby the  
25 book, computer, or the like within the sealable container can be viewed through said first planar member while keeping the sealable container sealed.

2. A sealable container as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said first and second flexible walls define sealed hand entry portions therein for tactile manipulation of materials within the sealed container.

5 3. A sealable container as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said first and second flexible walls have a plurality of folds for extending and retracting in a fan-like manner, whereby the sealable container is collapsible in a compact mode.

10 4. A sealable container is claimed in Claim 1, further comprising a book clip associated with said first planar member to engage and retain the book or the like adjacent and opposite said first planar member, thereby allowing the book or the like to be easily read through the first planar member.

15 5. A sealable container as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising a handle affixed to said second planar member for carrying the sealable container, while allowing the sealable container to lie flat upon a flat surface when the book or the like is being read within the sealable container.

20 6. A sealable container as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said first and second planar members are hingedly joined along said first edges so as to rotatively open or rotatively close with respect to one another, thereby allowing the sealable container to be folded or unfolded in a fan-like manner to reduce its overall volume for transport or storage, and then unfolded to receive and  
25 read the book, computer, or the like therein.

7. A sealable container as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising a lighting means having an on-off switch, wherein said lighting means is affixed to an interior of said sealable

container, and wherein said switch protrudes through the sealable container to allow for its operation, whereby the lighting means can be operatively turned on or off outside the sealable container.

5 8. A sealable container as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said means for attachment comprises a plurality of folds, and mating velcro strips, wherein a moisture-proof seal can be obtained by rolling said folds upon each other and aligning and overlapping said mating velcro strips to provide a substantially moisture-proof seal, thereby allowing ingress and egress to said interior of the  
10 sealable container for retrieving or inserting the book, computer, or the like.

9. A sealable container as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising retaining hooks affixed to one of said first and second planar members and having an orientation so as to mechanically  
15 engage and retain together said forth edges of said first and second planar members, holding the sealable container in a collapsed condition.

10 10. A sealable container as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said first and second planar members remain generally parallel to one another in a reading and collapsed condition, wherein while the sealable container is in an open condition said first and second planar members are extended away from each other, and wherein said planar members are coupled to one another along their first edges by a fourth flexible wall, and wherein said first, second, third  
25 and fourth flexible walls are of substantially equal dimensions, and sufficiently flexible so as to collapse between said first and second planar members to retain said flexible walls in a compact

manner between said first and second planar members in a collapsed condition.

11. A holding apparatus for holding books, magazines, computers or a like item comprising:

5 (a) an envelope means forming a sealable container wherein a portion of said envelope means is transparent;

(b) access means for providing ingress and egress to an interior of said envelope means, and wherein said access means can be sealed to prevent the ingress of moisture;

10 (c) a manipulation means for manipulating the item within said envelope means when said envelope means is sealed, wherein said item holding means can be transported to a watery, dusty or high-moisture environment with the item therein, and the item can be viewed through said transparent section of said envelope means while the item can be manipulated from outside said envelope means.

12. A holding apparatus as claimed in Claim 11 further comprising a retaining means for holding the item against said transparent section of said envelope means, thereby keeping the item in a fixed position for ease of viewing.

13. A holding apparatus as claimed in Claim 11, including a handle means for carrying said holding apparatus associated with said envelope means so as to lie substantially parallel to a flat surface supporting said envelope means when said envelope means is retaining the item to be viewed.

14. A holding apparatus as claimed in Claim 11, wherein said envelope means is rigid.

15. A holding apparatus as claimed in Claim 11, wherein said envelope means is flexible.

16. A holding apparatus as claimed in Claim 11, wherein said envelope means can be collapsed in size for compactness, and expanded for viewing purposes.

17. A holding apparatus as claimed in Claim 11, wherein said manipulation means comprising at least one glove integrally attached to said envelope means.

18. A holding apparatus as claimed in Claim 11, where said envelope means is inflatable.

19. A sealable case for holding an item to be viewed comprising:

a container means for containing the item, and having a sealable opening, a transparent portion, and a manipulation means for allowing the manipulation of the item within said container, said container being foldable in a carrying mode, and expandable in a viewing mode, whereby the item can be placed in said container means through said sealable opening and then sealed therein, carried to an aqueous or hostile environment, then expanded for viewing and manipulating the item sealed therein protected against the environment.

20. A sealable case as claimed in claim 19, wherein said container means is inflatable.

1/4

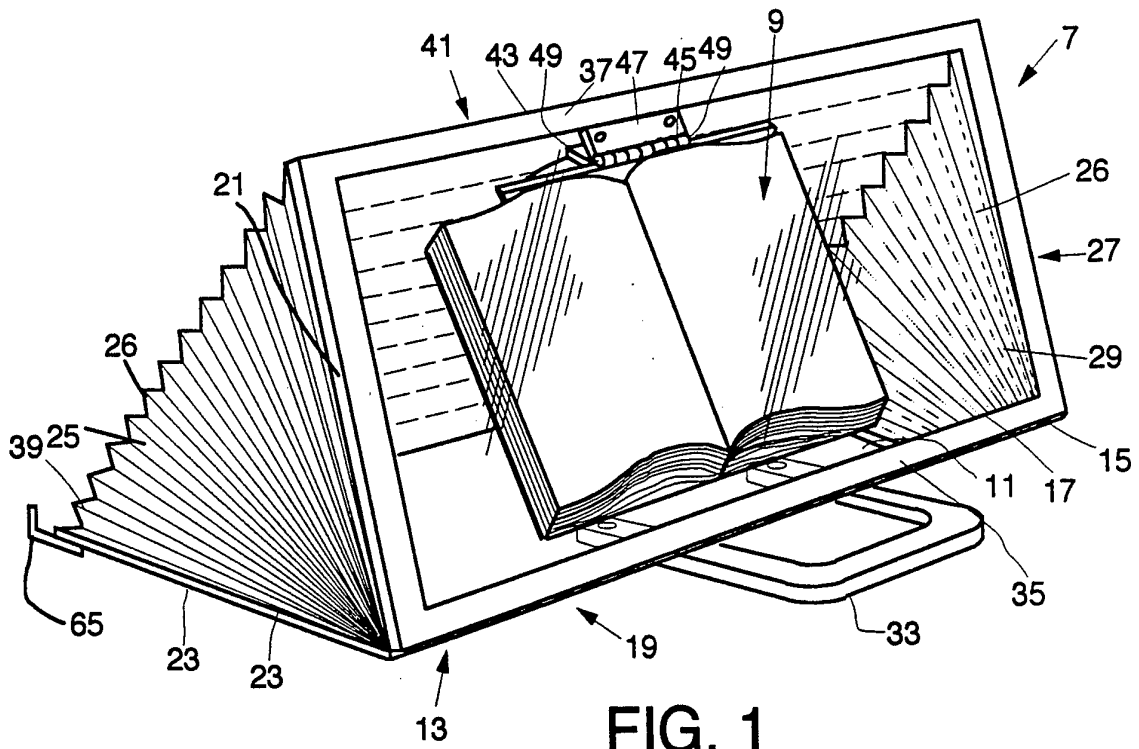


FIG. 1

FIG. 2.

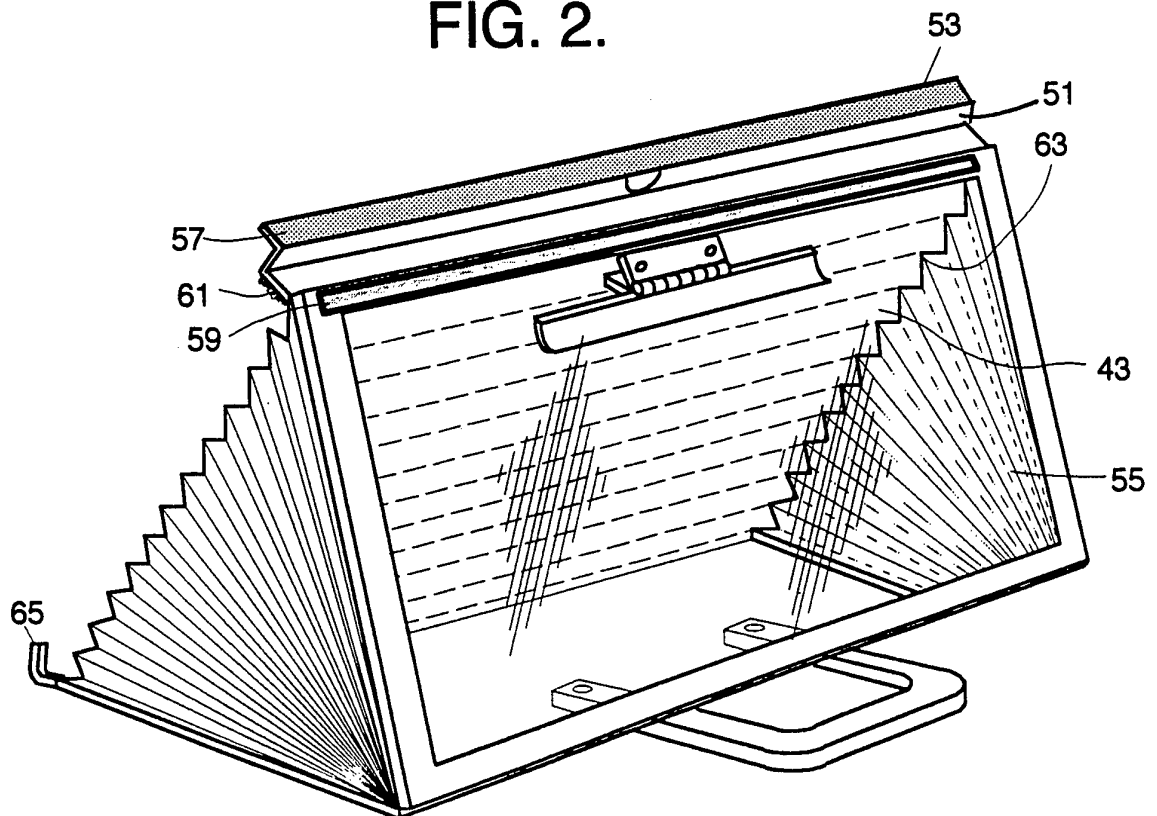




FIG. 3.

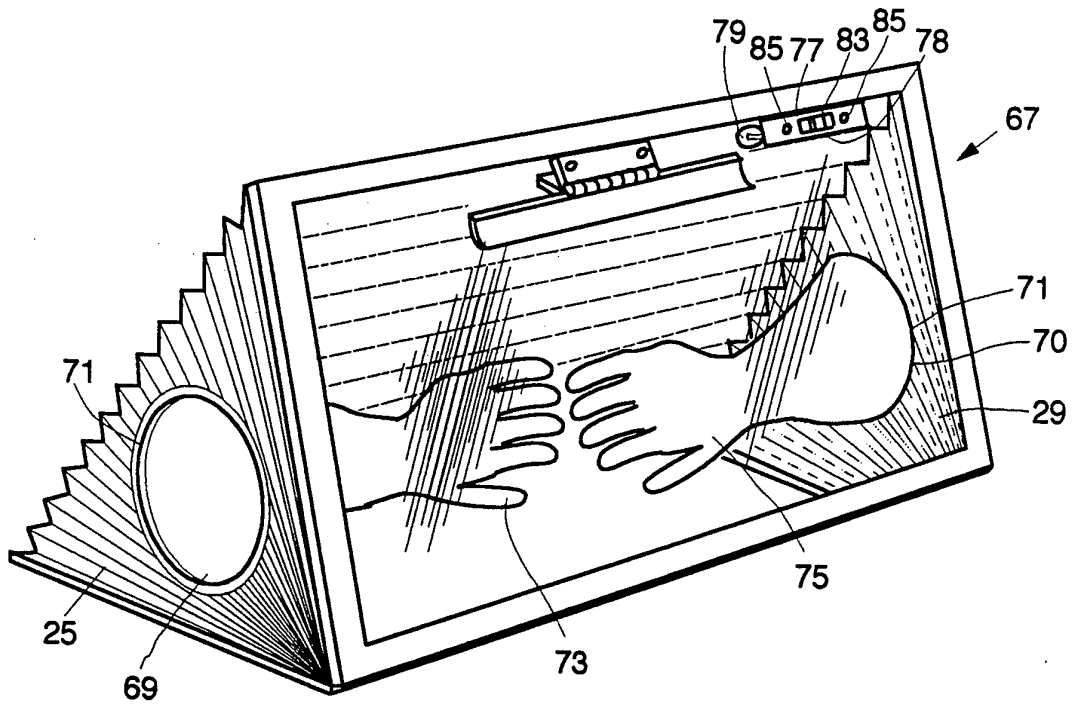


FIG. 4.

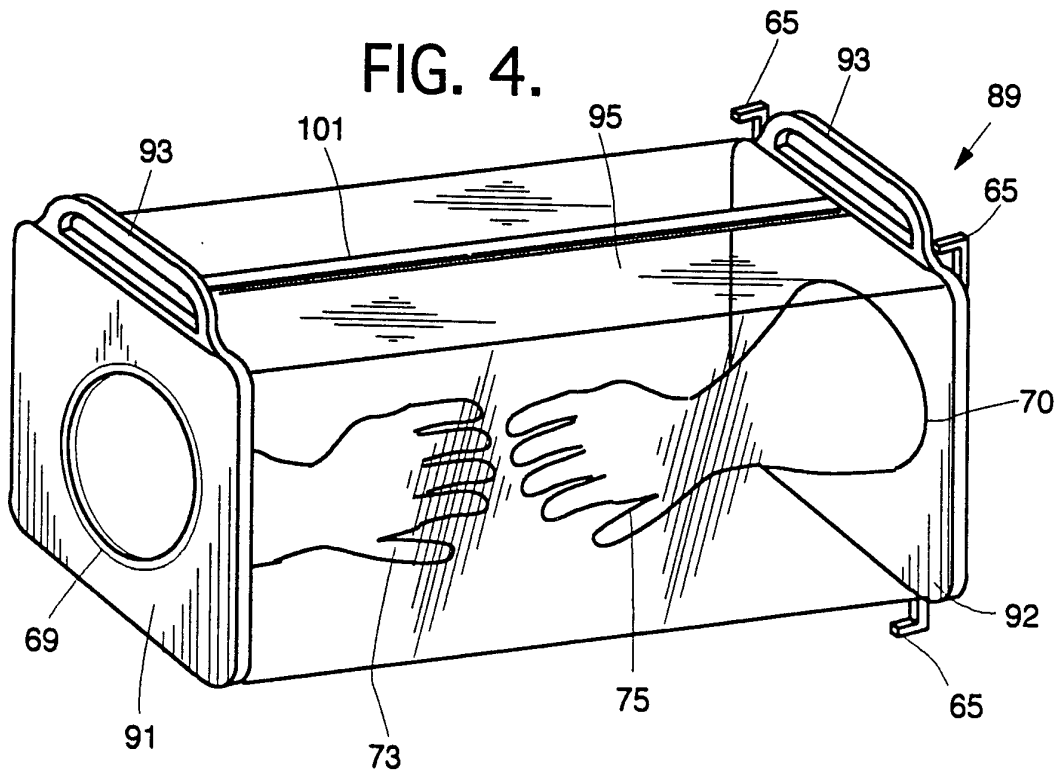


FIG. 5.

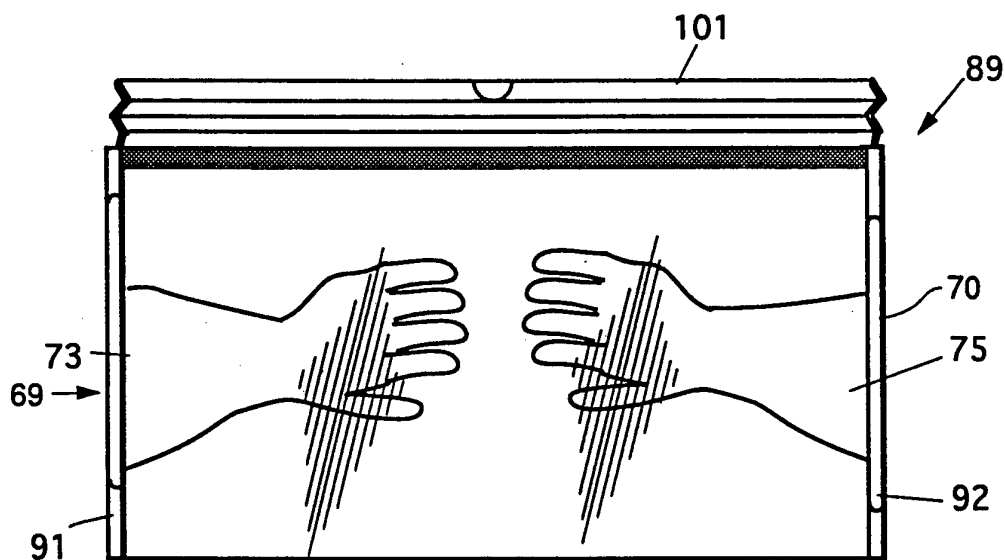
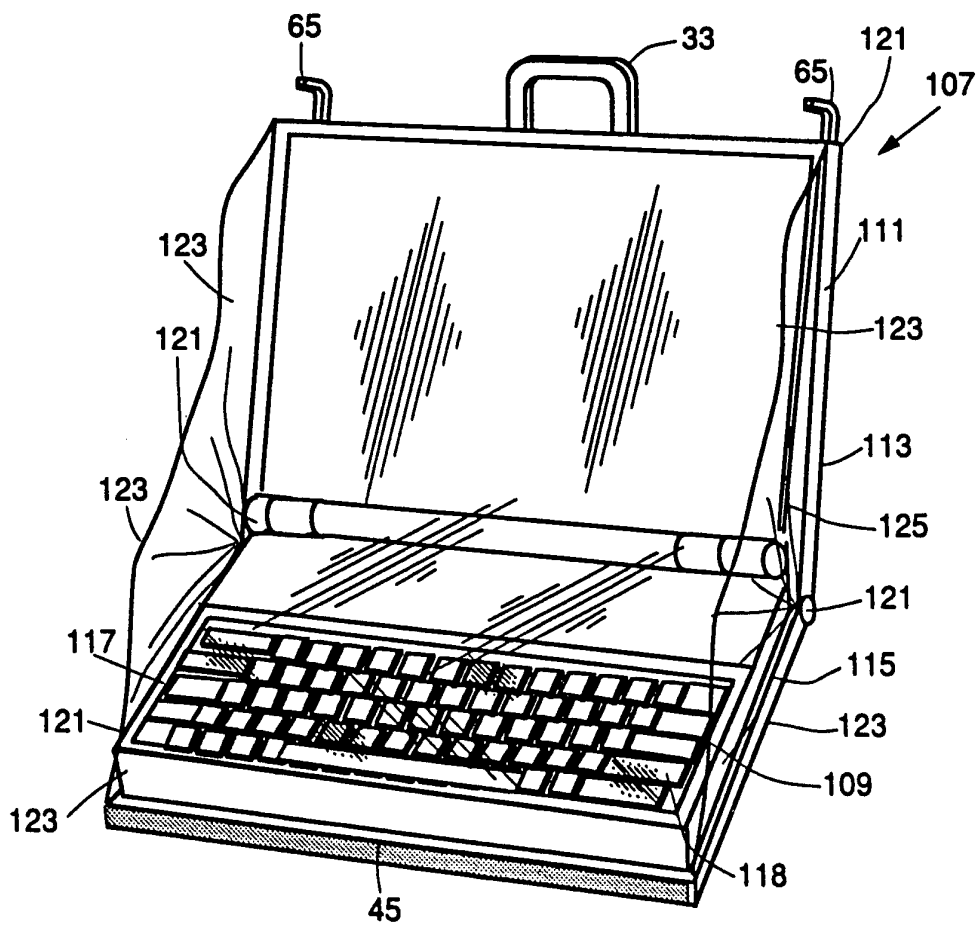


FIG. 6.



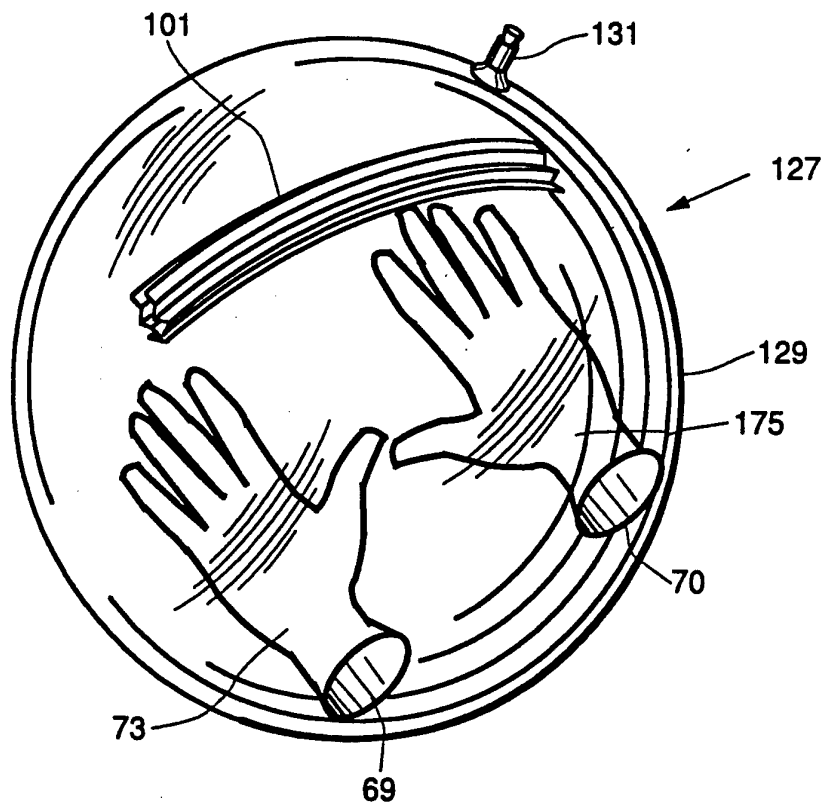


FIG. 7.

**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**

International application No.  
PCT/US93/06763

**A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER**

IPC(5) :IPC (5) A45F 5/12, A45C 7/00

US CL :Please See Extra Sheet.

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

**B. FIELDS SEARCHED**

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 206/424, 522; 600/21; 414/1, 8; 446/220, 222; 354/308; 150/103, 105, 107; 362/156, 155

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

**C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT**

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US, A, 1,471,886 (Dessau) 23 October 1923	1
X	US, A, 3,000,379 (Viers) 19 September 1961, see figs. 3-5	11, 12, 14-16 and 18-20
A	US, A, 4,015,111 (Spector) 29 March 1977	1
A	US, A, 4,044,867 (Fisher) 30 August 1977	1
A	US, A, 4,164,970 (Jordan) 21 August 1979	1
A	US, A, 4,184,596 (Avery) 22 January 1980	1
A	US, A, 4,335,538 (Greenberg) 22 June 1982	1
X	US, A, 4,612,916 (Akers et al.) 23 September 1986, see	11, 12 and 14-

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.  See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:	"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be part of particular relevance	"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
"E" earlier document published on or after the international filing date	"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"&" document member of the same patent family
"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	
"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	

Date of the actual completion of the international search

08 October 1993

Date of mailing of the international search report

28 OCT 1993

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US  
Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks  
Box PCT  
Washington, D.C. 20231

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## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.  
PCT/US93/06763

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US, A, 4,626,291 (Natale) 02 December 1986	1
A	US, A, 4,711,563 (Lass) 08 December 1987	1
A	US, A, 4,823,907 (Hoshi) 25 April 1989	1
A	US, A, 4,924,919 (Oyler) 15 May 1990	1
X	US, A, 5,061,235 (Hogan) 29 October 1991, see figure 6.	11 and 13-20
A	US, A, 5,013,068 (Maldonado) 07 May 1991	1
A	US, A, 5,005,702 (Davis et al.) 09 April 1991	1
A	US, A, 4,962,949 (Gibbs) 16 October 1990	1
A	US, A, 4,703,161 (McLean) 27 October 1987	1
A	US, A, 4,518,364 (Jacobson) 21 May 1985	1
A	US, A, 4,244,603 (De Monti) 13 January 1981	1
A	US, A, 4,099,656 (Neumann et al.) 11 July 1978	1
A	US, A, 3,267,830 (Van Gaasbeek) 23 August 1966	1
A	US, A, 2,600,240 (Grieb) 10 June 1952	1
A	US, A, 2,558,936 (Dickinson) 03 July 1951	1
A	US, A, 1,143,171 (Bushwick) 15 June 1915	1
A	US, A, 3,609,341 (Castaldo) 28 September 1971	1
A	US, A, 4,020,930 (Weber) 03 May 1977	1
A	US, A, 4,742,438 (King) 03 May 1988	1
A	US, A, 4,927,015 (Jones) 22 May 1990	1
A	US, A, 4,954,934 (Kidder et al.) 04 September 1990	1
A	US, A, 4,985,721 (Moon) 15 January 1991	1
P	US, A, 5,131,513 (Gossage) 21 July 1992	1

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.  
PCT/US93/06763**Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)**

This international report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1.  Claims Nos.:  
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
  
2.  Claims Nos.:  
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:
  
3.  Claims Nos.:  
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

**Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)**

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

## Telephone Practice

- I. The species comprising a flexible/expandable container classified in class 150 subclass 103 (claim 10).
- II. The species comprising a flexible/expandable container with a manipulation glove classified in class 354 subclass 308 (claims 11-13, 15-17 and 19).
- III. The species comprising a rigid container with a manipulation glove classified in class 206 subclass 424 (claim 14).
- IV. The species comprising an inflatable container classified in class 383 subclass 3 (claims 18 and 20).

1.  As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.
2.  As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3.  As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
  
4.  No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

**Remark on Protest**

- The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.  
 No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.  
PCT/US93/06763

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER:

US CL :

206/424, 522; 600/21; 414/1, 8; 446/220, 222; 354/308; 150/103, 105, 107; 362/156, 155